

Terrorist plots on airplanes and in Times Square. Iran developing nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles. A mysterious sinking of a South Korean naval vessel. The Chinese extending their military might. Pirates capturing ships of the Horn of Africa. Without even considering the wars we are fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is clear that the world is not becoming a safer place.

Unfortunately, these external threats are matched by a series of bad decisions by this Administration that are weakening our national security. The President killed the F-22 program, which was the best fighter aircraft in the world. The President cancelled our missile defense shield in Europe, leaving our troops stationed there and our NATO allies without a good defense against Iranian missiles. The President weakened our nuclear deterrence through the New START treaty and by slowing development of the SSBN platforms that provide our nuclear capabilities. The President has spent trillions to grow government domestically, but is refusing to give our military services the funding their truly need.

While the President may wish otherwise, we cannot achieve peace through weakness. Instead, we must remain faithful to our Constitutional duty to “provide for the common defense.” Yesterday, I joined with my Republican colleagues on the House Armed Services Committee to unveil what we believe are six simple truths that we will stand for as we seek to defend America:

1. **We need to stop apologizing for America and for our success.** Eloquent apologies will not stop leaders of countries like Iran, North Korea or Venezuela from working to gain weapons of mass destruction and weaken our nation and our allies.
2. **We need to keep terrorists off of our soil, not fight to bring them here.** It makes no sense to bring terrorists to New York City for a high profile trial or to a prison a few hundred miles north of St. Louis, when we have a facility in a secure location at Guantanamo Bay.
3. **We can defend America better from a position of strength, rather than a position of weakness.** . We should not throw away significant chunks of nuclear deterrent or tie our own hands on missile defense. We should not disarm ourselves to make the Russians happy.
4. **To defend America we need the best-trained, best-equipped Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps in the world** . Instead, the President is limiting spending on our military while spending uncontrollably everywhere else. While military leaders have to choose between new equipment and payroll, ineffective government agencies and bureaucracies are flush with cash.

**5. Our military personnel and their families will receive the support they have earned.**

We must make sure that our military personnel are well-paid and have the healthcare they deserve. Neither the men and women in uniform, nor their families, should be negatively impacted by the President's recent government takeover of healthcare

**6. Our defense strategy should be driven by our defense needs—not solely by the budget.**

The recent Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) made it clear, as have many recent meetings I have had with senior military leaders—we are making national security decisions based on a strict budget imposed by the White House. Instead, we should have an honest assessment of the risks we face and then Congress should decide how much we should spend to address each risk.

Defending America should be the top priority of the President and Congress. Unfortunately, American citizens have reason to be concerned. Next week, as the House Armed Services Committee considers next year's defense budget, I will work with my Republican colleagues, and any Democrats who are willing to join us, to address these very issues. We cannot achieve peace and security through weakness. Instead, we must work together to keep our nation strong and secure.

***Rep. Todd Akin represents Missouri's 2nd District in the U.S. House of Representatives. He was elected to the United States House of Representatives on November 7, 2000, continuing his service to the nation and the St. Louis area.***

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